



**King County**

Department of Community and Human Services

**Developmental Disabilities Division**

821 Second Avenue, Suite 400

Seattle, WA 98104-1519

Phone: 206-296-5214

TTY Relay: 711

FAX: 206-205-1632

[www.metrokc.gov/dchs/ddd/](http://www.metrokc.gov/dchs/ddd/)

## **Natural Environments Leadership Team Meeting June 1, 2006**

**Participants:** Kevin Bernadt, KCDDD Board  
Jon Botten, Children's Therapy Center  
Jane Campbell, King County DDD  
Sandy Duncan, CHAP  
Lisa Greenwald, Kindering Center  
Betsy McAlister, King County Parent Coalition  
Susan Sandall, UW-EEU  
Magan Scoggins, Encompass  
Katie Vornbrock, Hearing Speech & Deafness  
Jan Wrathall, King County DDD

**Minutes:** Jane Campbell, King County DDD

**Facilitator:** David Wertheimer, Kelly Point Partners

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, Susan Sandall made the motion to approve, seconded by Betsy McAlister and voted approved by the group.

### **JUSTIFICATIONS DOCUMENT:**

The workgroup's draft definition of the "where" part of the Natural Environments Litmus Document was presented. The group proposed a definition that is comprised of language from the CFR, State Application and Federal Reporting of Program Settings. All NELT members agreed to:

- Use of the Federal Language—"settings that are natural or normal for the child's age peers who have no disabilities". The group felt that the word "normal" has a loaded connotation for different cultures but because it is the wording of the law, it should not be changed in the Litmus Test. The consensus was to asterisk in the document that it is value laden but keep it, as written in the CFR.
- State Application definition—"Home, neighborhood or community settings in which children without disabilities participate". The group decided to add "or" between home and neighborhood.
- Federal Reporting of Program Settings—"If a setting with a group of children, most of the children present do not have disabilities...". There was much discussion about whether to keep this as part of the Litmus Test since it is not a law or regulation. The group decided it would be part of the Litmus Test because it is what the agencies/state must report to the Feds.

**ENVISIONING A PREFERRED FUTURE:**

The group brainstormed about what the impact of change might be if the “where” definition of natural environments were the norm; what would the system look like; what would be the impact on families. The group felt that:

- Some providers would lead by transitioning to natural environments now, some later and that there might be a risk of losing agencies.
- There might be a possible reduction in capacity to the system.
- The system would need to figure out how to self-correct, perhaps open up to new providers.
- Professionals who work with the families must “buy-in” to the changes. The way they present information to families is important.
- At some point, there would be a need to break away from old ways of business, with everyone “stepping up to the plate” to make the necessary changes.
- The County needs to be pro-active to educate the wider community.
- FAQs might help families and providers, with a phone number to call with questions.

**MOVING FROM WHERE TO HOW**

David described a four-level paradigm of social systems change. The paradigm is an inverted triangle with the top half representing changes to services (what impacts families, direct service providers, their program managers and supervisors) and the lower half representing the changes to the system level (the funders, policy makers, agency CEOs, the NE Leadership Team) that are needed to provide the structure and support (vision, contracting, policies) to provide the necessary supports for the people impacted at the service levels.

**NEXT STEPS**

The next NELT meeting will be June 12, at 9:30 am. There will be a panel of local experts to talk about “how” practices can be delivered.